

Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

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John Anfinson Named New Chief of Resource Management for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

MINNEAPOLIS / ST. PAUL (12/13/2010) — The National Park Service has named John O. Anfinson the new Chief of Resource Management for the region's largest urban national park—the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA).

Among Anfinson's new responsibilities are the key tasks of promoting stewardship, engaging partners, reviewing proposed actions, and facilitating planning along the river. "Throughout my career, I have focused on cultural and historic resources but with a passionate interest in the environment. Now I am excited by the opportunity and challenge of working with the full array of resources tied to this great river," said Anfinson. Anfinson takes over for Steve Johnson, who retired from the National Park Service in August. Park Superintendent Paul Labovitz comments "John is the perfect choice to lead this National Park forward in the area of natural and cultural resource management. John's experience and passion about the Mississippi River will help reveal more about this global treasure to our friends, neighbors and visitors."

Anfinson worked as the park's historian and cultural resources specialist since 2000, and held the same position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1980 to 2000. He is the author of "The River We Have Wrought: A History of the Upper Mississippi" and "River of History: A Historic Resources Study of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area" in addition to many articles about the Mississippi River.

In 2005 Anfinson was one of 10 U.S. delegates to the joint U.S./Dutch symposium on water resources at The Hague, Netherlands. He has articles forthcoming, including "Engineering Earth: the Impacts of Megaengineering" (University of Kentucky Press 2011) and "The City, the River, the Bridge: Before and After the Bridge Collapse" (University of Minnesota Press 2011). Anfinson holds a Ph.D. in American History from the University of Minnesota.

The National Park's 72-mile boundary stretches along the Mississippi River from Ramsey, through Minneapolis and Saint Paul, to just south of Hastings. It includes a range of cultural, economic and natural resources — from historic sites like Fort Snelling to unique features including the river's only waterfall and gorge, to public parks and wildlife refuges. In addition to protecting the river's ecosystems and water quality and providing access points for recreation, the park offers a range of educational activities, including a ranger-led canoe, biking and hiking programs and the school programs "Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures" and "Big River Journey." www.nps.gov/miss